

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

☐ Action Date

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DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MANUAL

DPM Letter No. 451-8

DATE: OCT 10 2000

SUBJECT: Department of Transportation Awards and Recognition Systems

The Department of Transportation (DOT) Awards and Recognition Directive sets forth policy for establishing employee award and recognition systems within the Department. Policy and instructions contained in DPM Chapter 451, dated November 1, 1982, and all subsequent DPM issuances related to Chapter 451, are canceled. However, Operating Administrations (OA), will continue using their current awards and recognition systems until new internal policies under this Directive are approved for implementation by the Departmental Office of Human Resource Management.

A. DOT AWARDS AND RECOGNITION POLICY STATEMENT

Section A1-Purpose

The Awards and Recognition Directive is established to link awards and recognition systems within DOT to organizational performance outcomes, and encourage employees to work toward Strategic Goals and objectives as outlined in the Department's Strategic Plan, including innovation, cost-cutting, and enhanced customer service.

Section A2-Scope

The policies set forth in this Directive apply to non-performance related cash awards and non-monetary honorary awards. The Directive focuses on Departmentwide awards based on key objectives and the management strategies for achieving them. It focuses on the extent to which awards and recognition become a meaningful tool for sustaining and improving performance, increasing morale, and improving recruitment and retention. The key to the Directive is to link awards and recognition to organizational goals and make them of real value to employees. Further, the Directive provides clear-cut procedures for nominating employees

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for Departmental awards given at the Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony. Nominations for the major honorary awards within the Department must clearly show how the factors warranting nomination link directly to the Department's Strategic Plan. To support the Directive, each OA is required to develop an awards and recognition strategy which complies with Chapter 45 of Title 5, United States Code, and Chapter 451 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations. Each OA strategy shall provide for:

- A. The use of incentive awards as an integral part of supervision and management;
- B. The granting of awards only in recognition of contributions that are both significant and beyond the scope of achievement normally expected as part of the job;
- C. The granting of recognition proportionate to the value of the contribution to the Department or the achievement being recognized; and
- D. Assuring that awards under the Directive are not used as a substitute for overtime pay, poor job classification, promotion, or any other purpose not compatible with the criteria for the awards described in this Directive.

Section A3-Definitions

Operating Administration includes the Office of the Secretary, Office of the Inspector General, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Surface Transportation Board, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and the Transportation Administrative Service Center.

Secretarial Honorary Awards mean:

- The Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement (Gold Medal)
- The Secretary's Partnering for Excellence Award
- The Secretary's Award for Meritorious Achievement (Silver Medal)
- The Secretary's Award for Excellence
- The Secretary's Award for EEO/Affirmative Action
- The Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service
- The Secretary's Team Award
- The Secretary's Award for Valor

Section A4-Awards Review Board

The Awards Review Board will approve all of the awards presented at the Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony. The Awards Review Board functions as follows:

- A. The Board is comprised of three members, with the Assistant Secretary for Administration as the permanent member and Chairperson.

- B. The Departmental Director of Human Resource Management will serve as the Executive Secretary to the Board.
- C. The Assistant Secretary for Administration will nominate and the Secretary will designate the Head or Deputy Head of an Operating Administration and a Departmental Officer to serve two-year terms on the Board. If required, additional members of the Board may be selected from the Operating Administrations or Departmental Offices on an ad-hoc basis.
- D. The Board shall review nominations and make appropriate recommendations for civilian awards to the Secretary, where the Secretary's endorsement or approval is required or desired. The Board shall meet from time to time at the call of the Chairperson to review the operation of the awards program.

Section A5-Ad-hoc Awards Review Boards

The Department's Incentive Awards Coordinator, in coordination with representatives from the Transportation Administrative Service Center (TASC), will establish as necessary ad-hoc groups that will meet to review nominations from Operating Administrations and determine nominees for consideration for non-Departmental awards. Operating Administrations are required to screen nominations for such awards prior to submission for consideration at the Departmental level.

B. PAYMENT OF AWARDS

Section B1-Award Amounts

Operating Administrations may establish internal award scales, consistent with the provisions of this Directive. (See Appendix for assistance in determining award amounts.)

Section B2-Submission and Approval

- A. **Awards up to and including \$10,000.** Operating Administrations are authorized to grant cash awards for any amount up to \$10,000 per individual. However, internal Operating Administration strategies must include procedures to maintain reasonable consistency for similar achievements.
- B. **Awards over \$10,000 and through \$25,000.** Awards over \$10,000 and no more than \$25,000, must be forwarded to Secretary through the Departmental Director of Human Resource Management and must contain an endorsement of the Head of the recommending Operating Administration. The Departmental Director will review and forward the recommendation to the Secretary for endorsement to send the recommendation to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for approval.
- C. **Awards over \$25,000.** When a recommended award would grant more than \$25,000 to an individual employee, the recommendation must be forwarded to

Secretary through the Departmental Director of Human Resource Management and must contain an endorsement of the Head of the recommending Operating Administration. The Departmental Director will review and forward the recommendation to the Secretary for endorsement to send the recommendation to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for review. OPM shall review the recommendation and, if approved, submit it to the President for final approval.

Section B3-Armed Forces Members

- A. Military personnel may be given recognition when they meet the pertinent criteria. Coast Guard officers and enlisted personnel on active duty are eligible for appropriate military decorations and awards. All other members of the Armed Forces assigned to the Department must meet criteria established in the Department of Defense (DOD) Military Awards Program (DOD Instruction 1348.33).
- B. All deserving Coast Guard military personnel assigned to civilian positions in the Department are eligible to receive the Secretary's honorary awards rather than military awards, when appropriate.
- C. All deserving Coast Guard military personnel assigned to civilian divisions in the Department may be considered for military awards when appropriate. Criteria for Coast Guard awards are contained in the U.S. Coast Guard Medals and Awards Manual (COMDTINST M1650.25B). Questions concerning military awards should be directed to the Coast Guard Office of Military Personnel, Medals and Awards Division (G-WPM-3).

Section B4-Payment Responsibility

The head of each Operating Administration is required to allocate adequate funds to assure prompt payment of cash awards.

C. OPERATING ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Section C1-Reports

- A. Operating Administrations shall submit an annual statistical and narrative report on the use of their award strategy. The report is due to the Departmental Director of Human Resource Management by the end of the third week in October.
- B. Additional reports on suggestion activity may be requested as necessary.

Section C2-Program Evaluation

One year from the date of implementation of this Directive, each Operating Administration will evaluate use of the procedures under this Directive to identify

best practices, lessons learned, and challenges for collective problem solving. The findings will be provided to the Departmental Director of Human Resource Management for inclusion in an overall study of the Department's Awards and Recognition Program.

D. TYPES OF MONETARY RECOGNITION

Section D1-Special Achievement Awards

- A. **Special Achievement and Time-Off Awards.** Recommendations based on a special act or service should be submitted within three months of the achievement. Such achievements may involve.
- 1) Individual or group achievement involving scientific or technological advances;
 - 2) Achievement which contributed significantly to more efficient or economical operations involving tangible savings;
 - 3) Performance which has resulted in overcoming unusual difficulties;
 - 4) Exemplary or courageous action in an emergency situation related to official employment;
 - 5) Acceptance of articles for publication, presenting technical papers to professional organizations, or performing other similar personal projects which can be shown to have significantly increased public understanding and interest in Departmental operations or to have contributed significantly to a mission of the Department;
 - 6) Improving service to the public in a specific or measurable way; and/or
 - 7) Notable improvement in the public relations of the Department.
- B. **On-the-Spot Awards.** A supervisor or manager may grant no more than two on the spot awards per year at the maximum amount of \$250 dollars each to any employee for an act or service. If a supervisor or manager grants an award of less than \$250, the employee receiving the award may receive as many on-the-spot awards during the year as it takes to reach a cumulative total of \$500 during the year. A minimum justification will be needed to grant an on the spot award. Each Operating Administration shall have procedures established in their internal strategy to ensure employee performance is recognized as quickly as possible after the act or service warranting an award.

Section D2-Quality Step Increases

- A. The high quality performance deserving of a quality step increase must have been sustained for at least three months. No more than one quality step increase may be granted within any 52-week period.
- B. The recommendation to grant a quality step increase must be supported by the employee's most recent appraisal, or when the appraisal is more than 60 days old, by a supplemental written statement setting forth the reasons for granting the increase.

- C. A quality step increase can only be granted when the most recent performance appraisal supports the conclusion that overall performance of the employee's assigned duties and responsibilities substantially exceeds an acceptable level of competence, and performance of all critical job elements or core competencies have been at least satisfactory or pass in the case of an individual covered by a pass/fail performance appraisal system.
- D. A quality step increase may be granted to an employee only when at the time it becomes effective, the employee is expected to remain at least 60-days in the same or a similar position at the same grade level in which his or her performance can be expected to continue at the same level of effectiveness.

E. NON-MONETARY RECOGNITION

Section E1-Honorary Recognition

The Department's Honorary Awards Program provides for several categories of awards to DOT employees. For the most part, all of these awards must clearly show a visible link to some segment of the Department's Strategic Plan, in that the duties warranting the award directly assisted in the Department moving toward or accomplishing its Strategic Goals.

Section E2-Award Nominations and Allocations

- A. In May of each year, the Assistant Secretary for Administration will issue a memorandum requesting nominations for honorary awards to be presented at the Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony. The memorandum will include an Operating Administration allocation of the number of nominations each may submit for each award. The allocation is strictly for the number of nominations that may be submitted for consideration, and it does not reflect the number of awards an individual OA will receive.
- B. Nominations will be submitted in eight copies on DOT Form 3200.2, Recommendation for Secretarial Award. Justifications must conform to the space allotted on the form, except in special circumstances.
- C. When there is more than one nomination from an Operating Administration for a specific award, the Operating Administration should provide a statement of the relative rank order of the nominations.
- D. Nominations based primarily on years of service, or constituting retirement testimonials, will not be considered.

Section E3-Honorary Award Criteria

A. The Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement (Gold Medal)

This is the Department's highest honor, granted in recognition of exceptionally outstanding leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of marked national or international significance, which reflect great credit on the Department and the Federal Government. This award may be given to an individual or a group. The Secretary selects the recipient of this award and nominations are not solicited.

B. The Secretary's Partnering For Excellence Award

- 1) This is the second highest award within the Department. It recognizes intermodal teams/groups who have used the Partnering for Excellence model to further ONE DOT activities supporting one or more of the Strategic Goals as provided in the Department's Strategic Plan. Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate teams/groups for the Partnering for Excellence Award. Teams/groups may also nominate themselves, but must be endorsed by a sponsoring Departmental Officer or Operating Administrator. Nominations require the concurrence of all modes represented on the team/group.
- 2) Nominations must specifically address each element included in the following criteria:
 - a. **Teamwork** – Describe how the members of the team/group work together effectively in coordinating and carrying out assignments to achieve common objectives. At least one example of an activity, which displays cooperation, coordination and group process skills, is required.
 - b. **Problem Solving** – Describe how the members of the group or team effectively use problem-solving methods, techniques, and tools as appropriate to achieve desired objectives and/or integrate objectives, procedures, etc., of participating administrations.
 - c. **Customer Focus** – Describe the link between the work of the team and the benefits derived by the customers; how customer input and feedback was obtained; and how it was used to identify trends, opportunities and performance gaps, integrating it with other performance data to target areas needing improvement; and identify resulting corrective actions taken to improve services to the customers. Where appropriate, describe how using an intermodal approach enhanced customer service.

- d. **Creative and Innovative Techniques** – Describe creative and innovative techniques used by the team to develop recommendations for improvements. The work of the team should reflect an awareness of evolving methods, procedures and technologies. Highlight techniques that promote cooperation and collaboration across administrations.
 - e. **Results** – Describe results accomplished by the team – objectives met, solutions found, and processes changed or improved.
- 3) Narrative supporting the nomination is limited to one page per criterion/element, and/or Strategic Goal. Attachments will not be considered. TASC, Human Resource Service Office, will convene a panel to evaluate and rank nominations.

C. The Secretary's Award for Meritorious Achievement (Silver Medal)

- 1) This is the third highest award within the Department for civilian employees. Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate individuals for the Meritorious Achievement Award, which is conferred by the Secretary.
- 2) Nominations for this award will be granted for meritorious contributions of high value to the Department in meeting one or more of the Strategic Goals, as provided in the Department's Strategic Plan. Examples of such contributions include:
 - a. a valuable scientific or technological contribution consistent with the strategic direction of the Department;
 - b. accomplishment of assigned duties in such an outstanding manner as to be clearly exceptional among all those who have performed similar duties;
 - c. development and improvement of methods and procedures which have accomplished extraordinary results in moving toward the attainment of the Department's Strategic Goals;
 - d. eminent authorship in one or more areas directly related to the Department's Strategic Goals;
 - e. exceptional leadership which resulted in the successful accomplishment of the Department's strategic mission, the major redirection of objectives or accomplishments to meet unique or emergency situations;
 - f. contributions to the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Program of an outstanding or distinctive character;

- g. leadership, accomplishments or actions that make a significant contribution to building a strategic ONE DOT;
- h. demonstrated outstanding ability to manage diversity by creating an organizational environment that allows every employee to reach his or her full potential and fully contribute to the Department's mission;
- i. excelled and embraced the spirit and intent of the Department's Managing Diversity Order (Order Number 3200.1 dated January 21, 1998); or
- j. excellent customer service and improved customer satisfaction with transportation systems and Departmental services.

D. The Secretary's Award for Excellence

- 1) Throughout the Department, there are employees in clerical, administrative, technical and general support positions whose work is basic to meeting the Department's goals. Some of these employees are high achievers, yet go unrecognized in the honorary awards program because the meritorious and superior achievement awards require wider impact for achievements than are generally available to this group of employees. The Secretary's Award for Excellence is designed to recognize such employees. Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate individuals for this award.
- 2) Nominations are limited to career employees in grades GS-1 through GS-9 and wage grades WG-1 through WG-8.
- 3) Nominations will be based on outstanding achievements of all major duties. All aspects of performance must not only far exceed normal requirements, but also deserve special commendation. In addition, an employee can be recognized, wholly or in part for accomplishments or actions that contribute to a stronger ONE DOT. An employee need not have received the highest performance rating in the last rating period to be nominated for the Secretary's Award for Excellence providing he/she is performing at the level to earn such a rating at the time of the nomination. If the performance at the time of the nomination has increased from the time of the last appraisal, the nominating official must clearly address the employee's outstanding performance in the nomination.

E. The Secretary's Award for EEO/Affirmative Action

- 1) Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate individuals for this award, which demonstrates the value top-level management places upon employees, supervisors and managers who actively and effectively enhance the Department's efforts in the areas of

EEO and Affirmative Action. Employees whose primary job responsibility is in the area of EEO and Affirmative Action are not eligible for this award. They should be considered for the meritorious achievement award.

- 2) This award recognizes the Department's highest level of honor and recognition to those employees who have excelled in promoting equal opportunity/affirmative action while serving in positions that are not primarily EEO related.

F. The Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service.

- 1) Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate individuals for this award, which represents the Department's high level of interest in recognizing volunteer services. Employees at all grades and organizational levels are eligible for consideration. The Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service will be presented to the employee who has made significant contributions through any of the volunteer programs for which the Department provides support or sponsorship, or service to organizations within his or her community.
- 2) Criteria for selecting the awards recipients should include the length of volunteer service; number of volunteer hours per week, month or year; innovation or initiative in improving conditions of the organization being served; type of service rendered; and benefits to the community.

G. The Secretary's Team Award

- 1) Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate groups and teams (within an Administration or across Administrations) in recognition of meritorious contributions of high value to the Department in meeting one or more of the Strategic Goals, and whose exceptional performance results in the improvement, reinvention, or reengineering of practices, operations, and customer services. Groups and teams include cross-functional teams, natural work groups, design project groups, and process/quality action teams who work together as a unit to achieve shared objectives or missions. In cases where the nomination is for a cross modal team, the award will not count against the nominating administration's allocation.
- 2) Nominations must specifically address each element included in the following criteria:
 - a. **Teamwork**—Describe how the members of the team/group work together effectively either within an administration or across administrations in coordinating and carrying out assignments to achieve common objectives. At least one example of an activity, which displays cooperation, coordination and group process skills, is required.

- b. **Problem Solving**—Describe how the members of the group or team effectively use problem-solving methods, techniques, and tools as appropriate to achieve desired objectives and/or to integrate objectives, procedures, etc., of participating administrations.
- c. **Customer Focus**—Describe the link between the work of the team and the benefits derived by the customers; how customer input and feedback was obtained; and how it was used to identify trends, opportunities and performance gaps, integrating it with other performance data to target areas needing improvement; and identify resulting corrective actions taken to improve services to the customers. Where appropriate, describe how using an intermodal approach enhanced customer service.
- d. **Creative and Innovative Techniques**—Describe creative and innovative techniques used by the team to develop recommendations for improvements. The work of the team should reflect an awareness of evolving methods, procedures and technologies. Where appropriate, highlight techniques that promote cooperation and collaboration across administrations.
- e. **Results**—Describe results accomplished by the team—objectives met, solutions found, and processes changed or improved.

H. The Secretary's Award for Valor

- 1) Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations may nominate individuals for this award, which is the highest Departmental Award for acts of heroism or courage involving great personal risk by civilian employees under unusual circumstances.
- 2) To be eligible for nomination, an employee must have demonstrated outstanding courage and voluntary risk of personal safety in the face of danger in an emergency while on or off duty.

Section E4-Annual Awards Ceremony

- A. The Departmental Awards Ceremony will be held in the fall of each year in Washington, DC. The ceremony is designed as a showcase of Departmental activities that merit recognition.
- B. Details of the Awards Ceremony will be provided to Operating Administrations approximately 90 days prior to the ceremony.
- C. Personnel attending the Awards Ceremony shall be considered on duty if otherwise in a duty status. Award recipients from field units who are authorized to attend the ceremony will be authorized necessary travel and per diem.

F. CAREER SERVICE RECOGNITION

- A. The Department shall recognize employees for their total creditable service with the Federal Government. The service does not have to be continuous. Military service creditable toward an employee's service computation date and Federal service with other agencies must be included.
- B. Career recognition will be granted at the completion of the following years of service: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45 and 50.
- C. All DOT employees retiring under any provision of the Civil Service Retirement or Federal Employees Retirement Acts are eligible to receive a DOT retirement certificate. The Head of an Operating Administration or Departmental Officer will usually sign retirement certificates. However, if the Secretary's signature is desired on a retirement certificate, it must be submitted to TASC at least two weeks prior to anticipated presentation. The certificate must be pre-inscribed in the retiree's name, years of service, and clearly show where the Secretary is to sign.
- D. Distinguished Career Service Award.
 - 1) This award may be granted by the Secretary, Head of an Operating Administration or Departmental Officer to retiring employees with more than 20 years of Federal service who are deemed to have made significant contributions to the Federal service during their careers. Military service creditable toward an employee's service computation date is creditable time for this award.
 - 2) Criteria for Distinguished Career Service Award.
 - a. Clear identification of specific accomplishments throughout the employee's career, not just while in DOT; and
 - b. Service previously recognized by two or more of the following:
 - i. Outstanding Performance Rating or the equivalent.
 - ii. Quality Step Increases, or the equivalent.
 - iii. Special Achievement Awards.
 - iv. The Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement or Meritorious Achievement (Silver Medal) or the equivalent.
 - v. The Award for Superior Achievement (Bronze Medal) or the equivalent.

3) Procedures for Nomination.

- a. Individual Operating Administrations shall include appropriate procedures in their internal strategies for Distinguished Career Service Awards to be granted by Departmental Officers and Heads of Operating Administrations.
- b. When desired, the Distinguished Career Service Award may be granted by the Secretary. Nominations shall be submitted in four copies and forwarded to the Secretary through the appropriate Administration Head or Departmental Officer, at least four weeks prior to the anticipated presentation date in the following format:
 - i. Name of nominee.
 - ii. Title, series, and grade of current position.
 - iii. Brief biographical sketch.
 - iv. Listing of previous honors and awards.
 - v. A statement describing the employee's career achievements.
 - vi. The endorsement of the Departmental Officer or Head of the Operating Administration.

G. THE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

Section G1—Purpose

It is the Department's policy to:

- A. Fully support and utilize suggestion programs to promote efficiency, economy and mission effectiveness;
- B. Delegate authority for suggestion approval, implementation, and awards to the lowest supervisory levels practical;
- C. Promptly determine the merits of the individual suggestion and advise the originator of the outcome;
- D. Consider appropriate suggestions for Department-wide application;
- E. Refer suggestions which may be of benefit to other agencies, and consider suggestions referred from them on the same basis as suggestions originating within DOT; and

- F. Give weight to suggestion awards when selecting employees for promotion and in recognizing supervisors who have succeeded in motivating their employees' interest and participation in the suggestion program.

Section G2-Responsibilities

- A. Each internal Awards and Recognition Strategy, for those Operating Administrations with a suggestion program, will contain provisions requiring that an effective suggestion program be implemented within the OA as an integral part of their management responsibility.
- B. The internal strategy will designate program administration offices at appropriate organizational and geographical levels to provide technical guidance on the suggestion program and monitor the referral of suggestions.

Section G3-Submission

- A. Acceptable for consideration. Suggestions submitted under the program must both recommend an improvement and present a specific method of achieving the improvement.
- B. Not acceptable for consideration. Unless they are related to energy conservation, ideas relating to items such as employee benefits or services, working conditions, buildings and grounds, or routine safety practices, suggestions which require legislation to implement are not acceptable for consideration. Those ideas should be handled through administrative channels other than the suggestion program.

Section G4-Processing Suggestions

- A. Each Operating Administration having a suggestion system, must provide for the following:
 - 1) Suggestions must be in writing. Appropriate acknowledgments will be made promptly to the suggester.
 - 2) Evaluation of suggestions should normally occur within 90 days. Operating Administration time frames for processing suggestions should allow for referral to higher levels in order to adhere to the overall 90-day time frame.
 - 3) Referral channels will be described clearly.
- B. Wider application. In addition to the above, each suggestion system must provide that:
 - 1) Suggestions concerning offices/organizations of the Department or other Government agencies outside of the office/organization in which the

suggestion originates must be referred through the Suggestion Program Officer of that office/organization to the organization concerned.

- 2) Suggestions concerning matters having Department-wide application, having a Departmental policy impact, or which require contact with the Office of Personnel Management, the Congress, or the Office of Management and Budget, will be referred through the Suggestion Program Officer of the originating office/organization to the Suggestion Program Officer, TASC.
- 3) Before forwarding a suggestion to the Suggestion Program Officer, TASC, the organization considering submission must thoroughly evaluate it to determine the feasibility of adopting the suggestion within that organization should it be approved.
- 4) Identification numbers assigned to a suggestion will be entered as the subject heading for all correspondence related to the suggestion.

Section G5—Awards for Adopted Suggestions

- A. Awards of cash may be granted to employees for suggestions, ideas or inventions which directly contribute to the economy or efficiency of operations or increase effectiveness in carrying out Government programs or missions.
- B. Awards of cash and/or certificates will be granted only when final approval to implement the suggestion is obtained at a level authorized to issue awards under the suggestion program.
- C. Cash awards for suggestions should be paid in accordance with Section A2C and paragraph B – Payment of Awards. (See Appendix for recommended award amounts.)
- D. A supplemental cash award may be made to an employee if it is determined that the suggestion has a wider application or greater benefit than initially determined.

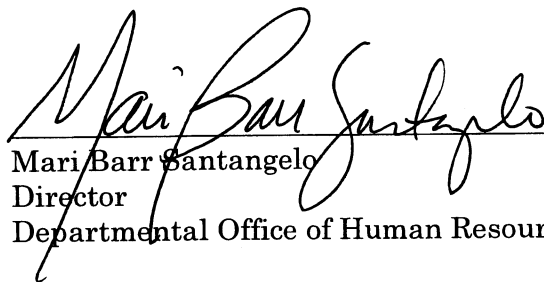
Section G6—Approval Authority

- A. Adoption and implementation of suggestions are management functions. Authority to approve suggestion awards should be delegated to the same supervisory level that has authority to direct implementation of the suggestion.
- B. Use of standing or ad-hoc committees to evaluate or recommend approval of suggestions should be limited to situations where review by several technical/professional disciplines or program areas is needed to determine whether a suggestion is theoretically sound and implementation is feasible. Use of suggestion committees is not recommended.

H. LEGAL ASPECTS

Operating Administrations have a financial obligation to pay cash awards for suggestions adopted outside the office of origin, but within their area of authority in accordance with provisions contained in individual Operating Administration Awards and Recognition strategies.

- A. When an Operating Administration adopts a suggestion made by an employee of another Operating Administration, a transfer of funds for awards of more than \$150 is required.
- B. DOT suggestions adopted by other Departments or Agencies, or suggestions adopted by DOT that originated in other Departments will require a transfer of funds whenever the award amount exceeds \$200.
- C. Awards for suggestions referred by OPM and adopted by DOT may require a transfer of funds as recommended by OPM.



Mari Barr Santangelo
Director
Departmental Office of Human Resource Management

Determining Award Amounts

Suggestions, Inventions, and Special Acts or Services

<i>Estimated First-Year Benefits to Government</i>	<i>Amount of Award</i>
Up to \$10,000	10 percent of benefits
\$10,001 through \$100,000	\$1000 for the first \$10,000, plus 3 percent of benefits over \$10,000
\$100,001 or more	\$3,700 for the first \$100,000, plus .5 percent of benefits over \$100,000

Quick Guide for Calculating Awards Based on Tangible Benefits

Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award
Up to \$10,000	10%	\$50,000	\$2,200	\$90,000	\$3,400	\$170,000	\$4,050	\$1,800,000	\$12,200
\$11,000	\$1,030	\$51,000	\$2,230	\$91,000	\$3,430	\$175,000	\$4,075	\$1,900,000	\$12,700
\$12,000	\$1,060	\$52,000	\$2,260	\$92,000	\$3,460	\$180,000	\$4,100	\$2,000,000	\$13,200
\$13,000	\$1,090	\$53,000	\$2,290	\$93,000	\$3,490	\$185,000	\$4,125	\$2,100,000	\$13,700
\$14,000	\$1,120	\$54,000	\$2,320	\$94,000	\$3,520	\$190,000	\$4,150	\$2,200,000	\$14,200
\$15,000	\$1,150	\$55,000	\$2,350	\$95,000	\$3,550	\$195,000	\$4,175	\$2,300,000	\$14,700
\$16,000	\$1,180	\$56,000	\$2,380	\$96,000	\$3,580	\$200,000	\$4,200	\$2,400,000	\$15,200
\$17,000	\$1,210	\$57,000	\$2,410	\$97,000	\$3,610	\$225,000	\$4,325	\$2,500,000	\$15,700
\$18,000	\$1,240	\$58,000	\$2,440	\$98,000	\$3,640	\$250,000	\$4,450	\$2,600,000	\$16,200
\$19,000	\$1,270	\$59,000	\$2,470	\$99,000	\$3,670	\$275,000	\$4,575	\$2,700,000	\$16,700
\$20,000	\$1,300	\$60,000	\$2,500	\$100,000	\$3,700	\$300,000	\$4,700	\$2,800,000	\$17,200
\$21,000	\$1,330	\$61,000	\$2,530	\$101,000	\$3,705	\$325,000	\$4,825	\$2,900,000	\$17,700
\$22,000	\$1,360	\$62,000	\$2,560	\$102,000	\$3,710	\$350,000	\$4,950	\$3,000,000	\$18,200
\$23,000	\$1,390	\$63,000	\$2,590	\$103,000	\$3,715	\$375,000	\$5,075	\$3,100,000	\$18,700
\$24,000	\$1,420	\$64,000	\$2,620	\$104,000	\$3,720	\$400,000	\$5,200	\$3,200,000	\$19,200
\$25,000	\$1,450	\$65,000	\$2,650	\$105,000	\$3,725	\$425,000	\$5,325	\$3,300,000	\$19,700
\$26,000	\$1,480	\$66,000	\$2,680	\$106,000	\$3,730	\$450,000	\$5,450	\$3,400,000	\$20,200
\$27,000	\$1,510	\$67,000	\$2,710	\$107,000	\$3,735	\$475,000	\$5,575	\$3,500,000	\$20,700
\$28,000	\$1,540	\$68,000	\$2,740	\$108,000	\$3,740	\$500,000	\$5,700	\$3,600,000	\$21,200
\$29,000	\$1,570	\$69,000	\$2,770	\$109,000	\$3,745	\$550,000	\$5,950	\$3,700,000	\$21,700
\$30,000	\$1,600	\$70,000	\$2,800	\$110,000	\$3,750	\$600,000	\$6,200	\$3,800,000	\$22,200
\$31,000	\$1,630	\$71,000	\$2,830	\$111,000	\$3,755	\$650,000	\$6,450	\$3,900,000	\$22,700
\$32,000	\$1,660	\$72,000	\$2,860	\$112,000	\$3,760	\$700,000	\$6,700	\$4,000,000	\$23,200
\$33,000	\$1,690	\$73,000	\$2,890	\$113,000	\$3,765	\$750,000	\$6,950	\$4,100,000	\$23,700
\$34,000	\$1,720	\$74,000	\$2,920	\$114,000	\$3,770	\$800,000	\$7,200	\$4,200,000	\$24,200
\$35,000	\$1,750	\$75,000	\$2,950	\$115,000	\$3,775	\$850,000	\$7,450	\$4,300,000	\$24,700
\$36,000	\$1,780	\$76,000	\$2,980	\$116,000	\$3,780	\$900,000	\$7,700	\$4,360,000	\$25,000**
\$37,000	\$1,810	\$77,000	\$3,010	\$117,000	\$3,785	\$950,000			
\$38,000	\$1,840	\$78,000	\$3,040	\$118,000	\$3,790	\$1,000,000	*Awards over \$10,000 require the approval of the Office of Personnel Management		
\$39,000	\$1,870	\$79,000	\$3,070	\$119,000	\$3,795	\$1,050,000			
\$40,000	\$1,900	\$80,000	\$3,100	\$120,000	\$3,800	\$1,100,000			
\$41,000	\$1,930	\$81,000	\$3,130	\$125,000	\$3,825	\$1,150,000	**Maximum award authorized by the Office of Personnel Management. A Presidential Award of up to \$10,000 may be paid in addition to the \$25,000.		
\$42,000	\$1,960	\$82,000	\$3,160	\$130,000	\$3,850	\$1,200,000			
\$43,000	\$1,990	\$83,000	\$3,190	\$135,000	\$3,875	\$1,250,000			
\$44,000	\$2,020	\$84,000	\$3,220	\$140,000	\$3,900	\$1,300,000			
\$45,000	\$2,050	\$85,000	\$3,250	\$145,000	\$3,925	\$1,350,000			
\$46,000	\$2,080	\$86,000	\$3,280	\$150,000	\$3,950	\$1,400,000			
\$47,000	\$2,110	\$87,000	\$3,310	\$155,000	\$3,975	\$1,500,000			
\$48,000	\$2,140	\$88,000	\$3,340	\$160,000	\$4,000	\$1,600,000			
\$49,000	\$2,170	\$89,000	\$3,370	\$165,000	\$4,025	\$1,700,000			

Scale of Awards Based on Intangible Benefits

Value of Benefit	Extent of Application			
	Limited	Extended	Broad	General
	Affects functions, mission, or personnel of one office, facility, installation, or an organizational element of a headquarters. Affects a small area of science and technology.	Affects functions, mission, or personnel of several offices, facilities, or installations. Affects an important area of science or technology.	Affects functions, mission, or personnel of an entire regional area of command. May be applicable to all of an independent agency or a large bureau. Affects a broad area of science and technology.	Affects functions, mission, or personnel of several regional areas or commands, or an entire department or large independent agency, or is in the public interest throughout the Nation or beyond.
MODERATE VALUE-- Change or modification of an operating principle or procedure which has moderate value sufficient to meet the minimum standard for a cash award: an improvement to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$25 - 100 (Compare with \$250-1,000 tangible benefits)	\$100 - 250 (Compare with \$1,000-2,500 tangible benefits)	\$250 - 500	\$500 - 1000
SUBSTANTIAL VALUE-- Substantial change or modification of an operating principle or procedure: an important improvement to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$100 - 250 (Compare with \$1,000-2,500 tangible benefits)	\$250 - 500 (Compare with \$2,500 - 5,000 tangible benefits)	\$500 - 1,000 (Compare with \$5,000 - \$10,000 tangible benefits)	\$1,000 - 2,500
HIGH VALUE -- Complete revision of a basic principle or procedure; a highly significant improvement to the value of a product, major activity, or program, or service to the public.	\$250 - 500	\$500 - 1,000 (Compare with \$5,000 - \$10,000 tangible benefits)	\$1,000 - 2,500 (Compare with \$10,000 - \$60,000 tangible benefits)	\$2,500 - 5,000 (Compare with \$60,000 - \$360,000 tangible benefits)
EXCEPTIONAL VALUE -- Initiation of a new principle or major procedure; a superior improvement to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$500 - 1000	\$1,000 - 2,500	\$2,500 - 5,000 (Compare with \$60,000 - \$360,000 tangible benefits)	\$5,000 - 10,000 (Compare with \$360,000 - \$1,360,000 tangible benefits)

- 1) The minimum award for tangible benefits may be granted only when the benefits reach or exceed \$250.
- 2) Contributions recognized by cash awards based on intangible benefits must be comparable, in value to the Government, with those based on tangible benefits. Comparisons are shown in parenthesis below the award amount in the above chart.
- 3) When a contribution has both tangible benefits and intangible benefits, the amount of the award must be based on the total value of the contribution to the Government, i.e. a combination of the award amount based on tangible and the award amount based on intangible benefits.